



DMV[®]
OF MINNESOTA



2022
Annual Report

2023
Objectives

COMMANDER'S MESSAGE 2022 - A Year of Resiliency

Over the last year, DAV of Minnesota continued to face ongoing challenges due to the pandemic. But we knew there was no option of stopping; we still had Veterans to serve - and we found new ways to fulfill those services. Our perseverance led to our recognition as one of only five DAV Departments nationwide that did not reduce services during COVID-19.

Not only did we not reduce services, in many cases our team increased our services for Veterans. Our DAV of Minnesota volunteers fulfilled a remarkable 75% of all Veteran Administration (VA) Medical Center Transportation services. We introduced a new Therapeutic Services Program in the state, providing access to music therapy for the first time for many Veterans. We were also able to return to a few in-person outdoor events, including a "hog hunt" in Texas and the Rainy Lake Fishing Trip.

Continued advocacy resulted in a productive legislative year for Veterans at both the state and federal levels. Support across the aisle increased critical benefits for disabled Veterans.

Our dedication to keeping our promises to Minnesota's Veterans never faltered. Our team of dedicated staff and volunteers flourished through adversity, and this passion is reflected in the sustained growth of our Veterans Service Organization. In fact, DAV of Minnesota is one of the only Veteran organizations that continues to experience growth. As we reflect on 2021, I am proud of this organization's resilience.

I would like to thank all our volunteers, staff, board members, and donors for your ongoing commitment to serving Minnesota's Veterans. Without you, much of what we accomplished this last year would not have been possible. Thank you for supporting DAV of Minnesota.



Mick Aguirre

Mick Aguirre
Commander
DAV Department of Minnesota

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ABOUT US //

Disabled American Veterans Department of Minnesota (DAV of Minnesota) is dedicated to a single purpose: keeping our promises to Minnesota's Veterans.

We accomplish this by ensuring that Veterans and their families can access the full range of benefits available to them, fighting for the interests of injured heroes at the Minnesota Legislature, providing employment resources to Veterans and their families and educating the public about the great sacrifices and needs of Veterans transitioning back to civilian life.

Made up of 19,000 members and 32 chapters across the state, this organization was built on the concept of "Veterans serving Veterans." Through our network of services, we are able to provide a lifetime of support for Veterans and their families.

DAV of Minnesota priorities include:

- > Providing free, professional assistance to Veterans and their families in obtaining benefits and services earned through military service.
- > Community outreach for program services to all Minnesotans generally and to disabled Veterans and their families specifically.
- > Representing the interests of disabled Veterans; their families; their widowed spouses and their orphans before state and local government.
- > Extending DAV's mission of hope into communities through a network of local chapters.
- > Ensuring opportunities for disabled Veterans to volunteer with fellow Veterans.



Scott Berndt
Treasurer



Rick Jarvis
Judge Advocate



Robert Sadoris
Chaplain



Stephen Whitehead
Adjutant



Ron Haugen
Past Department
Commander

EXECUTIVE TEAM //



Mick Aguirre
Department
Commander



Ellsworth Fields
Senior Vice
Commander



Oather Martin
1st Junior
Vice Commander



John Walker
2nd Junior
Vice Commander



Mike Medhaug
3rd Junior
Vice Commander



Darius Simon
4th Junior
Vice Commander

2022 HIGHLIGHTS

OUT AND ABOUT

In The Community

The DAV of Minnesota partnered with the St. Paul Saints in 2022. All Chapters had the opportunity to nominate their deserving members to be featured as the "Hero of the Game." The Saints recognized over 70 Minnesota Veterans during their home games at CHS Field. The partnership also included three separate Activation Nights, which provided additional spotlight on the DAV of Minnesota Transportation Program, the Volunteer Transportation Network and volunteers from both the Minneapolis and St. Cloud VA Medical Centers.

Carlton County Chapter 18 Commander Stan Heuer, Vice Commander Gary Dahl and Treasurer Raffy Johnson represented the more than 650 members who were selected as the Grand Marshals for the Cloquet July Fourth Parade. From fundraising to clothing drives to community meals, the group knows that sometimes, it all starts with a simple conversation. "The camaraderie in our Chapter is second to none," said Heuer. New members are always welcome and non-Veterans join their Chapter's auxiliary, which is growing nearly as fast as Chapter 18 itself.

Anoka Chapter 39 spearheaded efforts to expand the Transportation Program to the north metro. This new vehicle will serve Veterans around the Ramsey VA clinic locally and for services to the Minneapolis and St. Cloud VA hospitals and community care appointments. As an additional bonus, the vehicle's large capacity means extra space for riders and their caregivers and further routing possibilities to meet future demand.

TRACTION THROUGH Legislation

In 2022, DAV of Minnesota and the Commander's Task Force were instrumental in creating a Veterans Omnibus Bill that contains all relevant Veterans' legislation. Veterans' issues are non-partisan. With the Veterans Omnibus Bill, legislation that affects Veterans is considered on its merit and reflects Minnesota's commitment to Veterans.

Each year the DAV MN is in St. Paul fighting to take care of our Veterans, their families and survivors. Time and again we have seen important legislation for our Veterans fail because it was attached to bills that were full of non-Veteran issues. The Veterans Omnibus Bill changes that; it allows lawmakers to consider Veterans legislation on its own merits, without the other stuff thrown in.

That is what Minnesota's Veterans deserve, and we must fight to keep it that way in the future.

STEPHEN WHITEHEAD
Disabled American Veterans (DAV) Department Adjutant

VETERANS BY ERA SERVED

303,272
STRONG

VIETNAM 97,491



GULF (POST-9/11) 47,081



GULF (PRE-9/11) 37,093



KOREA 20,485



WWII 4,911



2022-2023 MEMBERSHIP

DAV of Minnesota is made up of 32 chapters across the state that supports local Veterans, families and their communities. Independently, chapters work to raise awareness, fundraise and create programs to fulfill our promises to those who have served. The unwavering commitment to supporting Veterans has not gone unnoticed.

CHAPTER	#	CITY	CURRENT MEMBERS	2022-23 MEMBERS
Minneapolis Chapter	1	Minneapolis	2,967	2,981
St. Paul Chapter	2	St. Paul	1,686	1,705
Russo-Golob Chapter	3	Hibbing	241	249
Cloverleaf Chapter	4	Askov	379	384
Gilbert W. Nordman Chapter	6	Duluth	901	900
North Central Chapter	7	Bemidji	657	650
GopherState Chapter	8	Various	554	553
St. Cloud Chapter	9	St. Cloud	917	926
Lyle C. Pearson Sr. Chapter	10	Mankato	777	781
Aitkin Chapter	11	Aitkin	126	135
Morrison Co. Chapter	12	Little Falls	516	516
Itasca County Chapter	13	Grand Rapids	460	463
Crookston Chapter	14	Crookston	194	201
New Ulm Chapter	15	New Ulm	610	605
Glaydon Iverson Chapter	16	Albert Lea	236	242
Washington County Chapter	17	Hugo	288	290
Carlton County Chapter	18	Carlton	680	673
Faribault Chapter	20	Faribault	297	301
Crow Wing County Chapter	22	Brainerd	403	408
Kolstad Chapter	23	Virginia	419	426
Western Chapter	24	Montevideo	317	326
Fergus Falls Chapter	25	Fergus Falls	293	303
Arnold Brandt Chapter	27	Austin	222	231
Mayo Southeast Chapter	28	Rochester	1,139	1,135
Lakeland Chapter	31	Detroit Lakes	255	262
South Central Chapter	32	Fairmont	366	367
Southwest Chapter	33	Marshall	236	243
West Central Chapter	34	Willmar	236	244
Hutchinson Chapter	37	Hutchinson	460	459
Park Rapids Chapter	38	Park Rapids	352	356
Anoka Chapter	39	Anoka	1,403	1,416
South Metro Chapter	40	Apple Valley	140	151
Northwest Minnesota Chapter	41	Roseau	83	91
DEP'T OF MINNESOTA TOTAL			18,810	18,973

Ensuring promises made to Minnesota Veterans are kept.



01

01 // VETERANS DAY ON THE HILL

On Apr. 20, 2022, DAV of Minnesota spearheaded a day-long event for Veterans from all Veteran Service Organizations to gather and network before marching to rally at the State Capitol Rotunda. The event was the picture of advocacy, displaying a unified front for issues impacting Veterans being considered by the Legislature. Gov. Walz spoke to the group, declaring his support for the first-ever Minnesota Omnibus Bill, a sentiment echoed by all Veteran leaders that addressed the cohort that day.



01



02

02 // MILITARY APPRECIATION DAY AT THE FARM

On Sept. 10, Sutton Ridge Farm hosted their annual event to honor and thank Disabled American Veterans and their families for their sacrifices. Events included speakers, live music, a flyover, Veteran resource information booths, and farm-fun activities.



02

2022 EVENTS //



03 // VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION NIGHT AT THE ST. PAUL SAINTS

On Sept. 3, volunteers from the Minneapolis VA Health Care System and St. Cloud VA Health Care System were invited to join the DAV of Minnesota for a "Volunteer Night." Over 100 volunteers were able to attend. The St. Paul Saints recognized the group for their selfless service and contributions to ensuring that promises made to Minnesota's Veterans are kept.



2022 STATE LEGISLATIVE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

VETERANS OMNIBUS BILL

In 2022, DAV of Minnesota and the Commander's Task Force were able to secure the first Veterans Omnibus Bill in Minnesota's history, a major accomplishment. The bill will ensure that Veterans' legislation will be given the attention and respect it deserves, and not be used as a bargaining chip in the political process.

POST 9/11 SERVICEMEMBER BONUS

There has been a long history of bonuses for Minnesota Veterans who served in our nation's wars including World War I, World War II, the Korean War, the Vietnam War and the Persian Gulf War. Now the Veterans of the Global War on Terror, who served from Sept. 11, 2001 to Aug. 30, 2021, are eligible for the Post 9/11 Servicemember Bonus, honoring their service and sacrifice. The Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs was designated as the program administrator.



PACT ACT

On the national front, Congress passed, and the President signed, the Sergeant First Class Heath Robinson Honoring Our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics (PACT) Act of 2022. The bill is the most inclusive and beneficial piece of Veterans' legislation in recent times. It will expand and extend eligibility for VA health care for Veterans with toxic exposures and Veterans of the Vietnam, Gulf War, and post-9/11 eras. It will add 20-plus more presumptive conditions for burn pits, Agent Orange, and other toxic exposures and add more presumptive-exposure locations for Agent Orange and radiation. The bill requires VA to provide a toxic exposure screening to every Veteran enrolled in VA health care, and will help improve research, staff education, and treatment related to toxic exposures. If you are a Veteran or survivor, you can file claims now to apply for PACT Act-related benefits.

MinnFluence SERVING MINNESOTA'S VETERANS

> WHAT IT IS // MinnFluence is a tool to help connect Veterans and their supporters directly with their lawmakers at the state level when important action needs to be taken. It is a local alert network that the DAV of Minnesota can use to let you know when your lawmaker is needed to move forward legislation or when votes happen. It can update you on how your lawmaker voted, and can keep you informed throughout the legislative process.

> HOW IT WORKS // When a new MinnFluencer signs up, the network will ask for address, email and phone. With that information it will fill in who your State Representative and State Senator are and what committees they are on or leadership positions. With this information the Department's Legislative Director can track key legislation, and when your Representative or Senator are needed to support something, get a hearing, or could hold a key vote, it allows DAV of Minnesota to reach out to you specifically to take action.

You do not need to be a Veteran to sign up. All are welcome. The MinnFluence Network was already instrumental in the passage of the first ever Veterans Omnibus Bill in Minnesota, and if we work together to build a larger network, our contributions will only grow.



2023 LEGISLATIVE OBJECTIVES

AMEND THE PROPERTY TAX VALUE EXCLUSION

Background: In Minnesota, Disabled Veterans rated 70, 80, 90, or 100 percent (non-permanent and total) are eligible for a \$150,000 property tax value exclusion. DAV of Minnesota has identified multiple gaps and opportunities to enhance this benefit for Minnesota's disabled Veterans and their surviving spouses.

- ✓ New language in the law to accomplish allowing surviving spouses to apply regardless of how long it takes for VA, elected and appointed officials to recognize their spouse's sacrifice. Presently there is a two-year limit.
- ✓ Increase the exclusion to \$200,000 and \$400,000 to reflect increasing home values across the state.
- ✓ Surviving spouses can transfer the exclusion to a new house, but it is limited to "equal or lesser value." Remove this language.
- ✓ Lower the level of eligibility from 70 percent service-connected rating to 50 percent for Veterans to receive some form of exclusion.



HASTINGS VETERANS HOME

Background: Many of the buildings at the Hastings Veterans Home are over 100 years old. The facilities are outdated and do not allow for services to be offered to Women Veterans.

- ✓ **Proposal:** Include \$59.6 million into a bonding bill for the replacement and consolidation of six of nine buildings on the Hastings Veterans Home campus. If this money is invested, the federal grant will contribute \$111 million, bringing federal tax dollars back to Minnesota for our Veterans.

VETERANS OMNIBUS BILL

Background: The Minnesota Veterans community worked together in the last legislative session to create the first Veterans Omnibus Bill for Minnesota. Building on this success, Minnesota DAV will again work with the Veterans community toward another single-topic omnibus bill for Veteran-specific legislation to directly prioritize issues impacting Minnesota Veterans.

- ✓ **Proposal:** A 2023 single-topic Veterans Omnibus Bill.

CHANGE 9/11 SERVICEMEMBER BONUS

Background: The state of Minnesota needs to provide the post-9/11 Servicemember Bonus to all Veterans who were residents of Minnesota during their military service, not just those who began their service in Minnesota. There is a discrimination factor against active-duty Veterans in comparison to National Guard and Reserve Veterans. MDVA Commissioner Larry Herke has stated his support for this legislative priority.

- ✓ **Proposal:** Add language to allow for a "catch-all" of the additional campaign medals and "one off" scenarios for Veterans intended to receive the \$1,200 level bonus.



TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM Growth

The Disabled American Veterans of Minnesota Transportation Program provides free transportation to Veterans in Minnesota to attend their VA medical appointments at four medical centers and at locally-based clinics. **The program has 40 vehicles stationed in 20 communities.**

Changes this past year have improved the program both for the Veterans and the volunteer drivers.

- > One Ford Transit and two Honda CRVs were added to the DAV fleet. The vehicles have been wrapped and delivered to Fargo, Minneapolis and Anoka-Ramsey. One more Ford Transit is on back-order.
- > The Northwest Metro area has been expanded with the help of Chapter 39 and the DAV Foundation and the new Ford Transit will serve four counties.
- > The “driving billboards” that comprise the DAV fleet have aimed their messages this past year at recognizing and honoring women Veterans, using the statement, “Don’t Forget, Women Serve too.”
- > Four volunteer drivers were honored for their service with a free outing at a St. Paul Saints baseball game where their service was highlighted and honored during the game.

The DAV of Minnesota continues to emphasize the critical connection between volunteer drivers and Veterans. This connection not only provides the life-saving transportation, but also the benefit of volunteers and Hospital Service Coordinators being a welcoming and calming gateway into the complex VA system for hundreds of Veterans and their families.



DON'T FORGET, WOMEN SERVE TOO

DAV of Minnesota’s Transportation program has consistently been a leader and trailblazer in the nation. Our “driving billboards” are known to stand out in a crowd. With DAV of Minnesota’s mission to spotlight female Veterans, leadership saw how these “driving billboards” could further that mission. 2022 vehicle donations have highlighted female Veterans, including the statement “Don’t Forget, Women Serve Too.” Women make up 14% of the current enlisted ranks and 16% of the commissioned ranks in the U.S. military. This is just one small step DAV of MN is doing to make the image of female Veterans more commonplace.

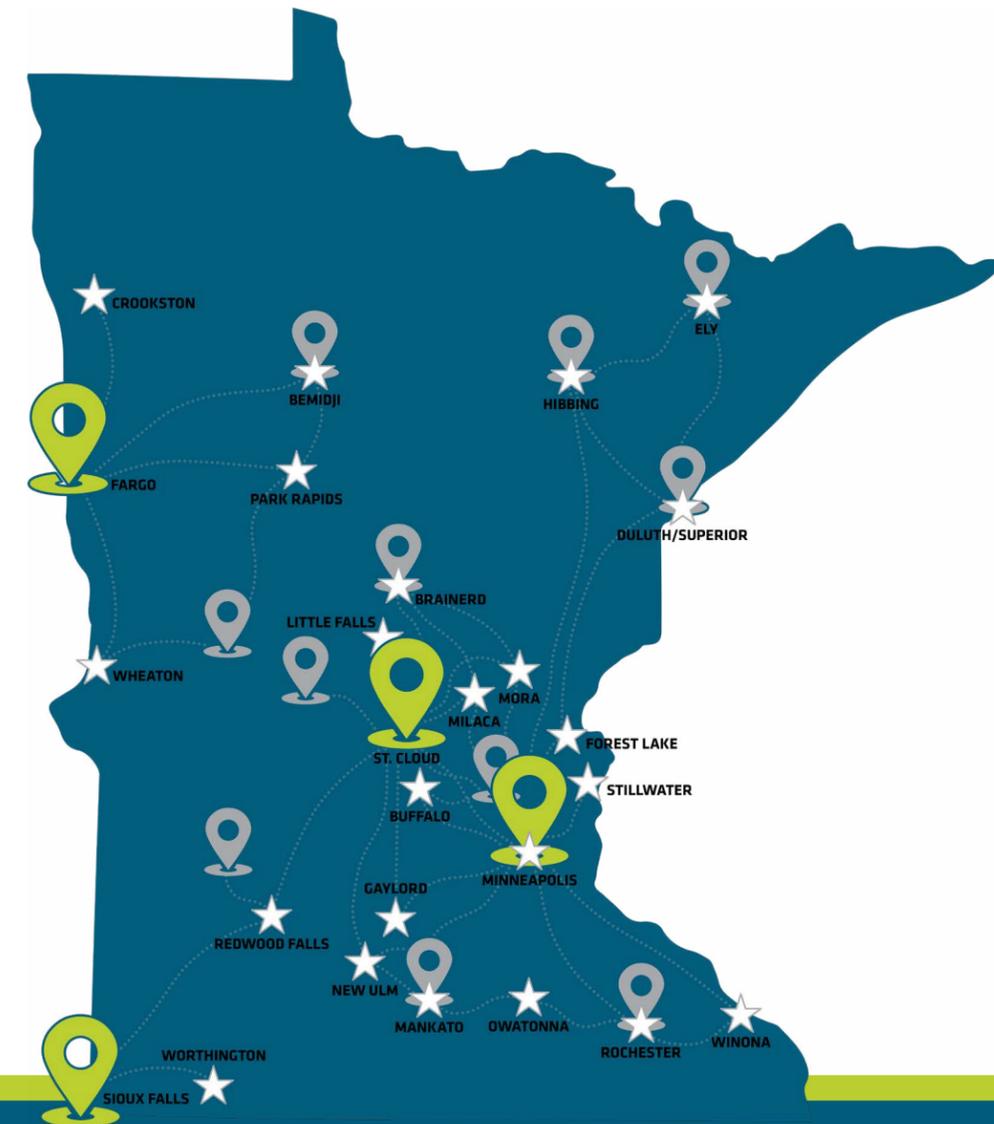


Volunteers MAKE IT ALL POSSIBLE

195 volunteers help to sustain DAV of Minnesota’s Transportation program. Without their commitment to serving our Veterans, we would not be able to continue this essential service. In 2022, our team gave 39,604 hours and transported 18,981 Veterans to and from their VA or VA-scheduled medical appointments.

SCHEDULE A RIDE OR VOLUNTEER TO DRIVE

- > **Metro**
612-467-2768
- > **Central Minnesota**
320-252-1670 ext.6676
- > **Northeast Minnesota**
715-398-2406
- > **Northwest Minnesota**
855-277-9787
- > **Southeast Minnesota**
507-703-1139



2022 TRANSPORTATION NUMBERS

				
917,906	23,703	188	39,961	\$1,196,831.95
Miles driven by volunteer drivers	Veterans transported	Volunteer drivers	Hours invested transporting Veterans	Amount the VA saves in travel costs

VOLUNTEER DRIVERS

Ely	3	Mille Lacs County	2	St. Cloud	19
Duluth	25	Morrison County	2	Virginia	12
Kanabec County	4	Rochester	11	Winona	3
Mankato	3	Northeast	3	Wright County	5
Metro	66	Northwest	37	10 volunteers currently going through training.	
		(including Worthington)			

OUTDOOR PROGRAM //



Some would say there's nothing better for a Veteran's heart and soul than getting her or him outside to enjoy nature and the camaraderie of fellow Veterans. The Disabled American Veterans of Minnesota had a great year, hosting trips around the state to immerse Veterans in fishing, hunting and ice fishing and the fellowship of their comrades.

These trips included a stay at Veterans on the Lake in Ely where the Veterans fished for walleyes and saw all the improvements being made at the resort. In the Duluth area, on the inland lakes and reservoirs, Veterans again chased the elusive walleye. Veteran anglers spent an amazing week on a houseboat in the middle of Voyageur's National Park. The next stop was Lake Winnibigoshish where the Veterans caught walleyes for several days in Williams Narrows. The last fishing trip was back in Ely for some trout fishing. The trout were a little tough to catch, but the team managed to snare a few.

With the cold weather, the Veterans outings turned to hunting, and our annual deer hunt in Glenwood where everyone had a good time. There aren't too many things more peaceful than sitting out in nature and the wildlife all around you.

> WILLIAMS NARROWS

With great weather, 22 Veterans took to the boats at Williams Narrows on Cut Foot Sioux Lake. The group caught more than 500 fish over three days, but angling and catching fish were only part of the experience as the Veterans gathered to spend time together, share experiences and find healing together.



“We catch the occasional fish, but the best part of outings is the camaraderie and fellowship with other disabled Veterans. It's a very enjoyable experience.”

GERALD MARTIN
Outdoor Program Participant

> VETERANS ON THE LAKE

With a goal of catching some Lake Trout and Rainbow Trout, Veterans took to the boats on Fall Lake at Veterans on the Lake Resort near Ely. Some Rainbow Trout were caught, and the Veterans enjoyed the relaxing accommodations at the ever-improving resort.

The primary source of revenue for DAV of Minnesota is generated from the collection and wholesale of household donations, and both the statewide chapters and the department benefit from this commitment. Through collection boxes located in Greater Minnesota, clothing drives, and Twin Cities residential collection, the DAV of Minnesota team schedules pick-ups, deliveries, and distribution to our commercial partners.

In 2022, clothing and household item donations allowed for the repurposing of over 8.2 million pounds of unused or unwanted items and provided approximately \$3.8 million dollars in funding for DAV of Minnesota chapter and department activities, programs, and services.

HOUSEHOLD DONATIONS

Since 2020, DAV of Minnesota has been the single featured charity partner at all Savers and Unique Thrift Community Donation Centers in Minnesota. On Dec. 8, DAV of Minnesota's 10th Community Donation Center opened in Inver Grove Heights.



8,200,000
Pounds of unwanted items repurposed



\$3,800,000
In funding for DAV of Minnesota

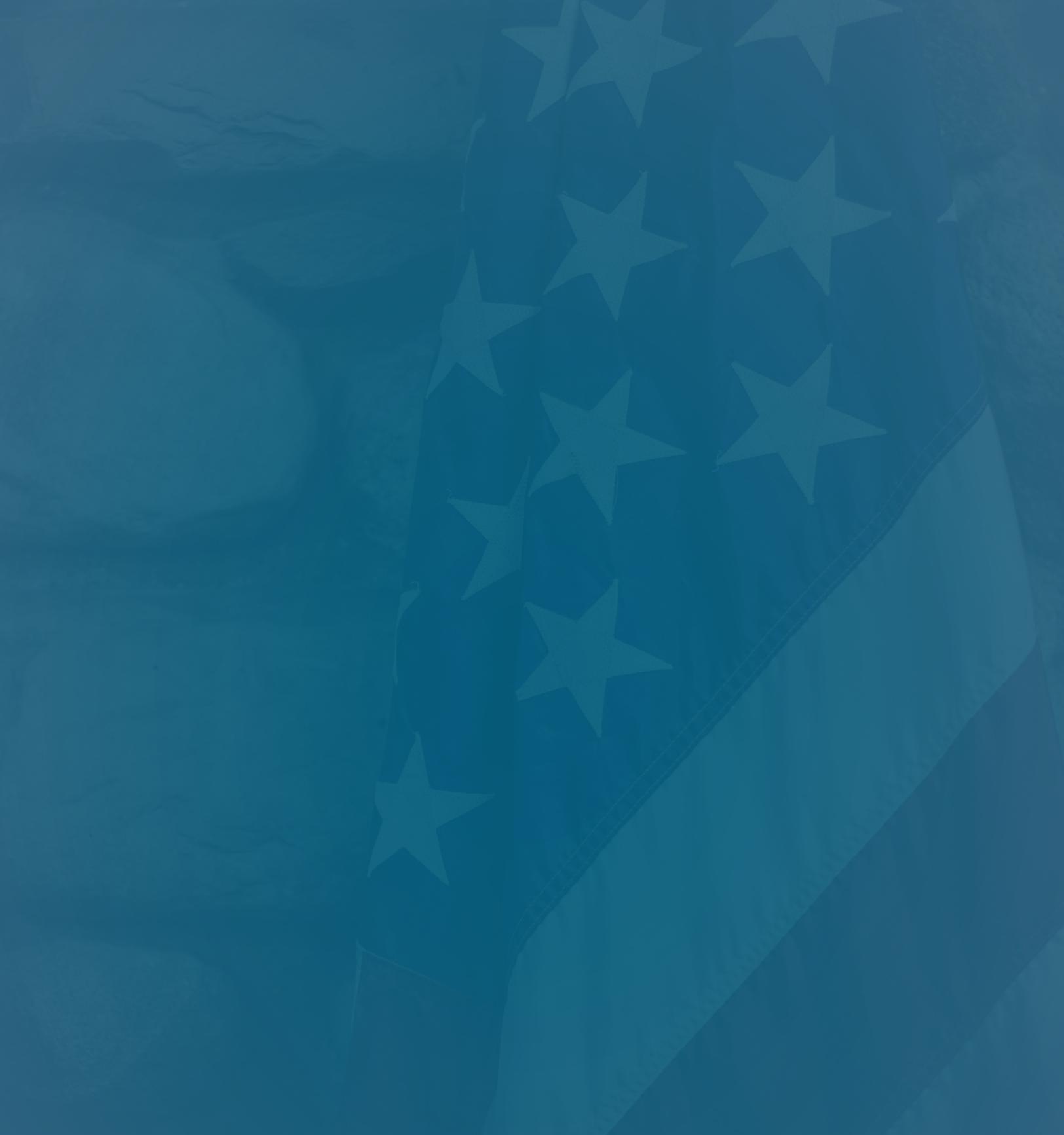
Household donations are the primary source of revenue for DAV of Minnesota.

2022 FINANCIALS //

In 2022, DAV of Minnesota invested \$0.75 of every dollar into Veterans services in Minnesota. We are proud that money coming into DAV of Minnesota goes back to Veterans in need.

REVENUE AND SUPPORT

	Without donor Restrictions	With donor Restrictions	Total
Contributions	\$ 11,194	\$ 11,915	\$ 23,109
Grants	322,332	-	322,332
National service allocation	126,196	-	126,196
Registrations and fees	22,368	-	22,368
In-kind contributions	89,302	-	89,302
Other income	4,026	-	4,026
Investment loss	(22,641)	-	(22,641)
Loss on sale of property and equipment	(8,091)	-	(8,091)
Net assets released from restriction	5,114	(5,114)	-
Total revenues and support before enterprise operations	549,800	6,801	556,601
Gross income from enterprise operations	3,835,170	-	3,835,170
Gross expenses from enterprise operations	(2,313,145)	-	(2,313,145)
Net income from enterprise operations	1,522,025	-	1,522,025
Total revenue and support	2,071,626	6,801	2,071,825
EXPENSES			
Program services:			
Veterans' services	808,384	-	808,384
Transportation network	435,013	-	435,013
Charitable giving	3,000	-	3,000
Total program	1,246,397	-	1,246,397
Management and General Expenses	393,361	-	393,361
Total expenses	1,639,758	-	1,639,758
Change in net assets	432,067	6,801	438,868
Net assets, beginning of year	1,372,230	3,699	1,375,929
Net assets, end of year	\$ 1,804,297	\$ 10,500	\$ 1,814,797



DAVMN.ORG

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS OF MINNESOTA

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20 West 12th Street
St. Paul, MN 55115
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